Sri Lanka and LTTE and several innocent Tamils are being killed and injured;

(b) whether using such attacks, hospitals and schools of eleven Tamils are targeted and attacked, resulting into the death of school children and patients;

(c) if so, whether there would be some concrete effort on the part of Government of India to save the Tamils in Sri Lanka; and

(d) whether Government of India would be silent like this, in case some other parts of our Indian origin are affected there?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) to (d) There have been hostilities between the Sri Lankan armed forces and the LTTE since the beginning of 2006, which have resulted in serious loss of lives including that of Tamil civilians. While conveying our concern at civilian casualities, we have emphasised to the Government of Sri Lanka that the only solution to the ethnic problem is a negotiated political settlement acceptable to all communities in Sri Lanka. We have also emphasised to the Government of Sri Lanka the need to make all possible efforts to strengthen the ceasefire and to revive the political dialogue in order to move the peace process forward.

Finalisation of Joint Anti-Terror Mechanism

1070. SHRI RAMDAS AGARWAL: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Indo-Pak Joint Commission has finalized Agenda for recently constituted Joint Anti-Terror Mechanism;

(b) if so, the issues on which both sides have agreed to take the dialogue forward in order to combat terrorism, the biggest menace in the post-cold war era; and

(c) the progress made in this regard by India and Pakistan, till date?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) No. The Joint Commission does not deal with the joint anti-terrorism mechanism.

(b) and (c) During the meeting of Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh with President Musharraf in Havana on 16 September 2006, it was decided to institutionalise the anti-terrorism mechanism between the two countries by identifying and implementing counter-terrorism initiatives and investigations. During the Foreign Secretary talks in November 2006 in New Delhi, both sides agreed to set up a 3-member anti-terrorism mechanism. The Joint-Anti Terrorism Mechanism met on 6 March 2007 in Islamabad.

Funds under Peace Building Commission

1071. SHRI RAVULA CHANDRA SEKAR REDDY: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have pledged $2 million for peace fund under the Peace Building Commission at the U.N.;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the present status thereof; and

(c) the role Government are playing in U.N. presently?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) and (b) Yes. India has contributed US $2 million to the Peacebuilding Fund (PBF) set up under the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) established by the United Nations in December 2005 as an inter-governmental advisory body to help countries in the process of post-conflict peacebuilding, recovery, reconstruction and development. PBF was launched on October 11, 2006 and has an overall target of $250 million to be raised through voluntary contributions. So far, PBF has received US $84 million.

(c) India is a member of the Organisational Committee of the PBC under the category of the top five providers of military personnel and civilian police to the UN peacekeeping operations. Besides continuing its active contribution to the UN peacekeeping operations, India also attaches high importance to the issues related to peacebuilding, on which the PBC will be rendering advice and assistance at the request of prospective receipient countries. India constructively and actively engages in its deliberations to further its objectives.